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Volume 32 | Number 4

Article 2

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1952

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### Recommended Citation

Gould, Beverly (1952) "We Go Pogo, Too," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 32 : No. 4 , Article 2.  
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol32/iss4/2>

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# We Go POGO, Too

by Beverly Gould

Technical Journalism Senior

THE "I GO POGO" rage is sweeping the country this year. It is hard to believe, but Pogo has done almost as much as the major party candidates in calling attention to the election year.

People like Pogo! The first book of Pogo strips was last December's best seller. The latest edition titled "I Go Pogo" is admittedly no bigger nor better than the last, according to the publishers, but to the 200,000 people who carried home the first Pogo book, that's good enough.

Pogo's fame has spread abroad. Space in the *London Observer* was devoted to the first Pogo volume. The paper used Pogo to point out that "not all American comic strips are devoted to brutality and sex."

The "father" of Pogo, humorist Walt Kelly (who is an ex-Disney animator), sometimes uses his brainchild to poke fun at American manners and morals. But most often they just go about their regular business holding elections, taking bird-walks, chasing sea serpents, fighting duels and marching on Washington, demanding to see the Easter Bunny.

Members of Pogo's political "Board of Strategy"

are his closest friends and include Albert, the debonnaire Alligator, who chain smokes cigars; Howland Owl, a professorial-looking bird, who crossed a geranium with a yew tree in order to get a Yew-ranium bush for making an Adam-bomb; Churchy la Femme, a turtle, who is a reformed pirate. All these characters live together in the Okefenoke Swamp.

Pogo began his career as a spear-bearer in another comic strip, but fan mail, something unusual in comic strips, made Pogo a star. Even college professors wrote letters of approval. During 1950, when the *Washington Star* juggled its comic strips and Pogo lost top billing on the page, 18 members of the "Pogo Protective League" demanded the strip "be returned to its rightfully superior position," lest "indignant readers everywhere rise-up in armed might to crush this infamy." Gravelly the *Star's* editor's restored Pogo to the top.

Whether you belong to the group that follows the doings of Pogo religiously or whether you think those who do are regressing mentally — you'll have to admit that Pogo's stumping had its effect on the awakening of American political responsibility.